



AKEL Central Committee on current developments on the Cyprus problem

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In its plenary session today, the Central Committee of AKEL conducted an in depth discussion on developments surrounding the Cyprus problem. It also

dealt with developments in Turkey and how they affect the effort to solve the Cyprus problem. The C.C. of AKEL unanimously approved the party leadership's handling of the Cyprus problem in the period that has elapsed since the previous session of the body.

The current negotiation procedure is a continuation of the effort that began in 2008. The C.C. proceeded to a comprehensive and detailed analysis of developments since then to this day so that the current state of play in the negotiations is made fully understandable.

The Central Committee reaffirmed the position of AKEL that bi-zonal and bi-communal federation is the only prevailing solution to our political problem. At the same time AKEL stresses that the solution of bi-communal, bi-zonal federation with a single and indivisible sovereignty, a single international personality and a single citizenship that will respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all Cypriots and the principle of political equality as defined in the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council safeguards the unity of our country and people. Furthermore, it reaffirms that AKEL, faithful to its long-standing positions on the Cyprus problem, the principles of International and European Law and the timeless principles of the solution as they have been confirmed in numerous decisions approved by the National Council, will remain firmly committed to the perspective of an overall solution.

Despite the fact that since autumn 2009 up to the adoption of the Joint Declaration drawn up in February 2014 all the other political forces were allied against the policy of AKEL, we have remained faithful to our positions disregarding any political cost. Especially after the election of Anastasiades as President of the Republic, AKEL tirelessly was warning him of the serious dangers which negotiations from scratch, as

well as the abandonment of the convergences achieved between Christofias – Talat, would entail. Subsequent developments themselves vindicated the positions of AKEL. The gap in the positions of the two sides widened significantly, whilst the UN Secretary-General submitted a report to the UN Security Council, which was the worst for a decade.

The assumption by Akinci of the leadership of the Turkish Cypriot community was of crucial importance in changing the climate with regards the negotiations. This development brought back the hope for a solution to the Cyprus problem, without of course ignoring the fact that everything and everyone will be judged at the negotiating table. We welcome the practical adoption so far of the Christofias- Talat convergences by Akinci, unlike Eroglu. We conclude that to the extent the convergences are supported by President Anastasiades as well the negotiations are moving forward, but this does not mean that all the problems have been overcome.

Of decisive importance with regards the further course of the negotiation procedure is the burning issue of property. Apart from the position for the return of the majority of the refugees under Greek Cypriot administration with full restoration to their homes and properties for the rest of the refugees as well, AKEL insists on regulations that should ensure the right of first choice of remedy to the lawful owner based on reasonable criteria to be agreed. If further substantive convergences on the property issue are not achieved, the negotiating procedure will be led to a new impasse. On the contrary, if the solution of the property issue on the above basis is made possible, the road will be paved for a substantive eventual discussion of the territory issue. Subsequently the way will also be paved for a discussion of the core issues regarding the withdrawal of the occupation troops and the settlers, security and the guarantees, thereby pressingly forcing Turkey to face up to its responsibilities. We reaffirm in this respect that AKEL strongly opposes any thoughts of replacing the current anachronistic system of guarantees by NATO and abandoning the position for demilitarization. We consider as guarantees unnecessary, given indeed the fact that the Republic of Cyprus is a member of the European Union.

AKEL, continuing previous initiatives it has undertaken, besides the discussion on the developments in its leading bodies at regular intervals, has decided to also proceed to the organization of a new round of open meetings – discussions on the Cyprus problem. Our goal remains the best possible briefing and enlightenment of citizens, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, both in Cyprus and abroad as well, with regards the course of the negotiation procedure and the content of the solution. The assumption of joint actions with the progressive forces of the Turkish Cypriot community must continue and be intensified. At the same time we will continue our political contacts abroad, with the ultimate goal of the international community

exerting its influence on the occupying power Turkey, so that it will comply with the principles of the solution of the Cyprus problem. The role of the international community in this direction is of decisive importance, given that the key to the solution of the Cyprus problem is in Turkey's hands.

In conclusion, the Central Committee of AKEL stresses the need for a comprehensive solution of the Cyprus problem as soon as possible. If regressions are avoided in the negotiations and the Christofias-Talat convergences are utilised then we serve in practice our goal for a solution based on principles, as they were also reaffirmed at the 22th Congress of AKEL. The worrying situation that is evolving on the domestic front as a result of the rejection of a bi-zonal bi-communal federal solution by certain political forces, anything but serves the interests of our country and people. On the contrary, it is inexorably leading to the perpetuation of the partition. We therefore urge all the political forces to demonstrate a responsible and constructive stand in a period when the negotiating procedure is at a critical crossroads. AKEL reassures the Cypriot people as a whole that it remains steadfastly committed to its responsible and patriotic policy, far from revanchist tendencies and petty party considerations. Without signing a blank check to anyone, AKEL will continue to consistently support the negotiation procedure, which is the only in effect way for a solution, the liberation and reunification of our homeland and people.